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ABSTRACT

Adult mentors have proved to be important contributors to the academic and personal success of many students. This publication reviews the literature on mentoring programs for at-risk students and presents information on both the goals and challenges of mentoring programs. It also describes key elements of effective mentoring programs. It begins with a general background discussion of mentoring. It next discusses what mentoring is expected to do, the goals of at-risk and other mentoring programs. Some of these goals deal with self-actualization, learning outcomes, retention, behavioral outcomes, and equity outcomes. This section also discusses benefits to mentors. The next section discusses the effectiveness of planned mentoring of at-risk students. The next section describes the critical elements of effective mentoring programs, including the location, frequency and duration of meetings, training and support of both mentors and students, and matching mentors and students. The publication goes on to discuss possible negative effects of mentoring, some alternatives to traditional mentoring relationships such as group mentoring, and administrative aspects of mentoring. Included in sidebars are a short list of online resources and rubrics defining effective and less-effective mentors. (Contains 66 references.) (WFA)

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